

Buckle up and possibly win prizes

On April 5 from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m., the Lexington Police Department will be sponsoring a Safety Belt Pledge Drive at the Stop & Shop located at 36 Bedford St. Those signing a pledge card agreeing to wear their safety belt for the next two weeks will receive a chance to win one of six \$25 gift certificates to the Stop & Shop. The gift certificates are being donated by the members of the Lexington Police Department. With only 56 percent of drivers and front seat passengers statewide using safety belts in 2001, the Lexington

Police Department is working to increase their use in Lexington.

This educational effort is part of Massachusetts' Governor's Highway Safety Bureau's Click It or Ticket Campaign. The GHSB is funding 180 police departments for participation in safety belt enforcement activities. Using safety belts consistently and correctly reduces the chance of serious injury or death by 50-70 percent. Additionally, Massachusetts communities with higher safety belt use rates have lower rates of crash-

related injuries.

According to Police Chief Christopher Casey, "Wearing a safety belt can be habit forming. Once we get in the habit, we continue to wear them. By increasing the number of people wearing safety belts, we will save lives and prevent injuries."

The Massachusetts safety belt law requires all occupants to be properly restrained when riding in a private passenger vehicle. Anyone not belted risks a \$25 fine. In addition, drivers can be fined for any passenger under 16 who is not belted.